4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

The present marriage rites of Coorg, especially in Kiggatnádu, where bride and bridegroom are welcomed together by the relatives and fellow-villagers of both parties, and sit together on the wedding-chair, closely resemble the common fashion of the Hindus, though they have not yet conformed altogether. 585 [191]

Young persons under sixteen years of age are not married in Coorg. Exceptions from this wholesome rule are very rare. It is to be hoped that the Coorgs will ever be preserved from the misery of child-marriages. 582

A young Coorg, when about to marry, has first to obtain the consent of his father or of the head of the family. This affair being settled, the Aruva of the house is taken into the marriage-council. He has to speak to the Aruva of the family, to whom the desired bride belongs. These Aruvas hold an important office among the Coorgs. They act as representatives, counsels, guardians of families and individuals on the great occasions of life. A particular friend of a neighbouring Coorg house becomes its Aruva, and a member of this house is naturally the Aruva of the other. On a certain day the Aruva of the intending bridegroom, accompained by his father or elder brother, goes to the house of the young woman, who is to be asked in marriage. They speak to the Aruva and to the head of the house. A favourable answer being returned, the whole house is carefully swept and a lamp is lit. Some families, affecting new fashions, at this time call in the astrologers to see whether the stars of the new couple will agree together or not. Where no horoscope has been taken, the astrologers, never at a loss, find the stars by the names of the parties! It is to be supposed, that the wise seers generally return acceptable answers. However, this part of the marriage-proceedings is evidently an innovation. The old fashion is to light a lamp in the newly swept house; when the two Aruvas, with the heads of the respective families, stand before 584 624 584 178 [787]

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[539]

Gave his bride a golden necklace
As a pledge, and eight days after
Was the wedding celebrated.

[574] In the afternoon, the bridegroom is conducted by his party in procession to the house of the bride. There a new feast is provided for the strangers, abundance of rice, pork and spirits. Dinner over, the parties of the bride and bridegroom, each consisting of the representatives of their respective villages, stand in two rows opposite each other. A lamp is lit between them. The bride's party, the Aruva being spokesman, ask the bridegroom's party: "do you give to our daughter, house and yard, field and jungle, gold and silver?" This question is thrice put. When it is answered in the affirmative, the bridegroom's Aruva delivers three little pebbles into the hand of the bride, who binds them into the hem of her garment, in token of her right to the property of her future husband's home. The bride is then conducted into the kitchen and seated upon a stool. A light is kindled. The bridegroom is now brought in. He strews some grains of rice upon her head, gives her a little milk to drink, and makes her a present of some coin, half a rupee or a rupee. He is succeeded by his parents and relatives, who salute the bride in the same manner. After this welcome, given by the whole family to the new member, the bridegroom takes the hand of his bride, bids her rise, and leads her into the outer room of the house. Thus the daughter bids farewell to the house of her birth and renounces all her claims upon the family and property of her parents. Upon this the wedding party returns to the bridegroom's house. Again the guests are [624] feasted. Then the Aruva of the husband conducts bride and bridegroom into their own room, and dismisses the party.

After five, or seven, or nine, or eleven days the bride's relatives arrive at the house of the newly married couple, and carry the bride with them.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

581 from fallen nature; but we are not at liberty to record those solitary outbursts of evil passions as an established system or even custom; Hindus might as well regard the disclosures of our divorce-courts as the normal state of European matrimony. Whilst thus vindicating the honor of the married life of the Coorgs, I would not flatter their pride; but rather induce them to render and to maintain their family-hearths pure and honorable withal and to infuse also a better spirit into their public feasts, those popular schools of morality, from which all foul and indecent ribaldry should be banished for ever.

595 *Polygamy* is not prohibited amongst the Coorgs, but it seldom occurs and chiefly in castes, where the first marriage is not blessed with male issue. It also happens, that a young widow is taken to wife by another member of the same house, but this is a voluntary engagement on either part, and the woman loses all claim to her first husband's property, being now the wife of another.

687 567 564 582 The odd expression "*Sirkar wives*" refers to a tyrannical practice of the Rajahs, who, when severely punishing a Coorg house, exterminated all the men and reduced the women to a state of slavery, making them to work on the Sirkar farms or Panyas. Any low caste fellow, who applied for a wife to the Rajah, might then obtain one of these poor creatures, and such marriages may account for the comparatively fair and handsome appearance of many a low caste native of Coorg.

586 624 *Divorce* on account of unfaithfulness is a recognised institution and solemnly carried out by the Aruvas of the unhappy couple and by the Takkas of the village. The children remain in the father's house, the mother returns with all her belongings to the house of her parents. Should a reconciliation take place, the husband of a restored wife is looked down upon with contempt. No refutation of the alleged "communism of women" could be stronger than these facts.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

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"Jáwa, jáwa, baby dear!
"When the baby's mother comes,
"She will give her darling milk.

"Jáwa, jáwa, baby dear!
"When the baby's father comes,
"He will bring you cocoanut,

"Jáwa, jáwa, baby dear!
"When the baby's brother comes,
"He will bring a little bird.

"Jáwa, jáwa, baby dear!
"When the baby's sister comes,
"She will bring a dish of rice."

Are we not reminded of our own familiar nursery-rhyme:—

"Baby, baby bunting, Father's gone a hunting.
"He's gone to get a rabbit's skin, to wrap my little baby in."

e. Death and funeral ceremonies.

764
[783] A case of death defiles the house for seven days. The corpse is either burnt or buried. The bodies of the young, who die under 16 years of age and those of women are buried; those of other persons, especially of old people are burnt.

763 On the death of a member of a Coorg family, messengers are despatched to every house of the village-community. As on a wedding, each house must send at least one male and one female member to do service on the occasion. The Aruva (624) of the family has again the direction of the ceremonies. 764 Under his superintendence the corpse is washed and dressed by the men, who have followed the funeral summons, if the deceased is a man, but if a woman, by the women. It is remarkable, that the Coorgs see no defilement in the handling of a corpse by the funeral party. It is enough for them, to bathe and to change clothes on their return home. The